



# Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

433 West Van Buren Street  
Suite 450  
Chicago, IL 60607

312-454-0400  
[cmap.illinois.gov](http://cmap.illinois.gov)

May 14, 2021

## SOLICITING PROPOSALS FOR QUALIFIED WRITER

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is seeking a writer with a strong community journalism background to create content to promote a suite of technical assistance programs. Details can be found in the attached scope of work.

Individuals interested in being considered for this work should submit a cover letter with price proposal, resume, and three (3) writing samples. Two of the writing samples should showcase your journalism skills, such as a published newspaper article. Submittals should be made to Michael Brown at [mbrown@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:mbrown@cmap.illinois.gov) no later than **3:00 p.m. on Friday, May 21, 2021**.

If you have any questions or need clarification, do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Michael Brown

Planning Principal  
[mbrown@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:mbrown@cmap.illinois.gov)



WORK PLAN NO.	POSITION TITLE	DATE
2018.009	Writer	5/4/201

### General Information

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is seeking a writer with a strong community journalism background to create content to promote a suite of technical assistance programs.

<b>DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT</b>	8 weeks
<b>ANTICIPATED START DATE</b>	6/1/2021
<b>SUPERVISION</b>	Work is performed under the supervision of CMAP Planning Principal

### 1. Role and definition of work

This position will support services funded by a MacArthur Foundation (MacFound) grant. The individual will research, conduct interviews, and write a report and a stand-alone executive summary — written for a non-technical audience — on the development, execution, and impacts of technical assistance services funded by the MacFound grant. The report will be used to develop collateral including videos, articles, press releases, memos, and brochures.

### 2. Essential functions

The essential functions listed below are representative of the tasks required. Reasonable accommodations can be made to enable an individual with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

NO.	DESCRIPTION
1	Meet with the Planning and Communications principals to discuss desired outcomes, creative vision, and project specifications.
2	Interview a variety of actors including CMAP executives and staff, elected and appointed officials, administrative staff, agency partners, and grant program managers.
3	Draft an outline for review with the Planning and Communications principals, based on interview notes and other documentation from the video calls.
4	Produce first draft of report and executive summary for review and feedback; revise as necessary.
5	Produce final versions of report and executive summary.

### 3. Background

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
CMAP received an initial grant from the Chicago Community Trust (CCT) and MacFound for <a href="#">building local government capacity</a> , a key recommendation of the ON TO 2050 plan. Starting in 2014, CMAP recognized

the importance of building capacity in local governments to advance the goals of regional planning. In 2015, CMAP partnered with Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) on a [strategy paper](#) outlining the potential of capacity-building technical assistance.

With a seed grant of \$500,000 for a 3-year program, CMAP launched a set of targeted technical assistance services to help local governments resolve the increasingly complex issues they face in their communities. This comprehensive program for training, technical assistance, and support targets communities with local resource constraints — specifically, the availability of knowledge and skills, staff time, funding, or all three. These “capacity-constrained communities” tend to serve vulnerable populations, including people of color and lower-income households, where the effective deployment of public investment and the attraction of private reinvestment is essential for residents to thrive. Some communities that have the greatest need for effective planning also have the least capacity to support such activities.

The pandemic significantly hampered program delivery in 2020 and necessitated a reimagining to address the challenges of remote work, effects of COVID-19, and time constraints of this grant. Now in the final year of program development and incubation, CMAP offered these innovative programs in a [Call for Planning Assistance](#) to the 7 counties and 284 municipalities of northeastern Illinois. While the call successfully attracted interest from new partners, the response also highlighted a need to strategically market and communicate the existence of the programs and its positive impacts to communities.

#### 4. Projects anticipated

NO.	DESCRIPTION	POTENTIAL DELIVERABLES	TIMEFRAME
1	In collaboration with project team, list key stakeholders and create an interview timetable to facilitate investigation and writing.	Interview Schedule	1 week
2	Conduct interviews with stakeholders while keeping Planning Principal informed about progress. Share cleaned-up interview notes with Principal.	Interviews and Interview Notes	3 weeks
3	As early as possible, create an outline for the report highlighting key challenges, lessons and insights, success stories, and impacts.	Report Outline	1 week
4	The report (15-20 pages) will be written, organized, and structured to be accessible, engaging, and visually appealing to a non-technical audience while celebrating the innovative programs supported by MacFound. It should include placeholders for photographs, quotes, info boxes, infographics, and other suggested data visualizations (e.g., charts, maps, tables).	Report	2 weeks
5	The executive summary (3-5 pages) will provide an overview with key points from the report and use a consistent writing style that’s engaging and accessible to non-technical audiences.	Executive Summary	1 week

## Personnel Requirements

### 4. Education and years of professional experience required

The individual's education and years of professional experience to satisfy **each** of the requirements listed below should be clearly identified in the materials to be submitted outlined in Section 6.

NO.	DESCRIPTION
1	A bachelor's degree in journalism, English, and/or communications
2	A minimum of seven (7) years of prior professional work experience
3	A minimum of five (5) years of direct experience in community journalism, as a reporter, editor, or combination of both roles

### 5. Knowledge, skills, and abilities required

The individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities to satisfy **each** of the requirements listed below should be clearly identified in the materials to be submitted outlined in Section 6.

NO.	DESCRIPTION
1	Exceptional writing and storytelling capabilities
2	Excellent verbal, written, and interpersonal communications
3	Superior understanding of grammar, style, and punctuation, with the ability to follow in-house brand and style guides
4	Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work in a collaborative team environment and integrate diverse thinking and feedback from multiple stakeholders
5	Excellent attention to detail, with strong planning, organizational, and research skills
6	Superior project and time management skills, with the ability to execute and prioritize work efficiently and accurately and deliver high-quality content under tight timelines
7	Demonstrated proficiency in business technology, including Microsoft Office Suite (with special emphasis on Word and PowerPoint)
8	Demonstrated ability to perform the essential functions listed in this document

### 6. Materials to be submitted

Individuals interested in being considered for this work should submit a cover letter with price proposal, resume, and three (3) writing samples. Two of the writing samples should showcase your journalism skills, such as a published newspaper article. Submittals should be made to Michael Brown at [mbrown@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:mbrown@cmap.illinois.gov) no later than **3:00 p.m. on Friday, May 21, 2021**.